

CLASSIFICATION **SECRET**COUNTRY **East Germany** NOFORN REPORTTOPIC **Exercise of the 7th Gds Mecz Div**

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EVALUATION PLACE OBTAINED

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DATE OF CONTENT

DATE OBTAINED DATE PREPARED **5 October 1955**

REFERENCES

PAGES **2** ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE)

REMARKS

This is UNEVALUATED Information

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Between 31 August and 1 September 1955, the following observations were made in the Beeskow-Merz-Rassmannsdorf-Goerzig-Rietz area:

At 1800 on 31 August, a large column passed through Merz, crossed Highway No 87 and proceeded westward in the direction of the Spree River near Radinkendorf. The column which came from the direction of Mixdorf, consisted of 207 vehicles and included an engineer unit with bridge-building equipment, infantry on trucks and 10 tanks. The crossing of the highway way was several times interrupted by attacks of 4 biplanes which circled at a low altitude. The soldiers left the vehicles and took shelter in the woods on either side of the column. Between 1830 and 2300, intensive artillery firing was heard, apparently from emplacements some 3 km north of Beeskow. It could not be determined that the artillery unit from Beeskow which was equipped with 122-mm field howitzers, participated in the exercise. The 4 biplanes were observed over the area north of Beeskow until almost midnight of 31 August. The aircraft which had set position lights dropped parachute flares with a burning time of 5 minutes. No ground attack aircraft were observed. It was learned on 1 September, that the units crossed the Spree River between Radinkendorf and Rassmannsdorf during the preceding night. It could not be determined whether the troops used ferries or constructed a bridge. The units were reportedly loaded onto several trains beginning at noon on 1 September.

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Comment. undoubtedly a phase of the exercise of the 7th Gds Mecz Div, which was held in the Spremberg-Cottbus-Lieberose-Beeskow area between 26 August and 1 September. The number of 207 vehicles tends to indicate that the 25th Gds Mecz Regt reinforced by engineer elements and other weapons left Frankfurt/Oder only on 30 or 31 August. Major elements of the division from Frankfurt/Oder, predominantly the 85th Gds Hv Tank SP Regt, from Fuerstenwalde and Berlin-Karlshorst assembled in the Spremberg-Cottbus area as early as 25 August. The artillery

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Beeskow is the 468th Gds Mort Regt, which has been partially equipped with field howitzers. The biplanes are quite definitely believed to belong to the Squadron of the Hq Fourth Gds Mecz Army. The loading in the Beeskow area is supported by the observations of return shipments to the posts on 1 and 2

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September. See movements of columns from the direction of Beeskow toward Frankfurt/Oder and 1/2 September. In spite of the unusually

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early date, all observations tend to indicate that this was a divisional exercise.

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